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With the Compliments of  
Avery D Andrews

H A H  
Andrews





*Thirty Days in the West  
Indies and South  
America.*



**THIRTY DAYS  
IN  
THE WEST INDIES  
&  
SOUTH AMERICA**

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*By*  
**AVERY D. ANDREWS**

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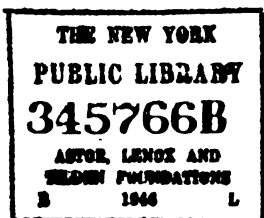
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# THIRTY DAYS IN THE WEST INDIES AND SOUTH AMERICA

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**F**OR some time the desirability of a personal visit to Trinidad and Venezuela by some of the general officers of the NATIONAL ASPHALT COMPANY, with a view of inspecting and perfecting the management of its large interests in those places, had been carefully considered, and on Wednesday, October 17, 1900, it was decided to make the trip without further delay. Mr. A. L. Barber very kindly placed his new and magnificent steam yacht, the Shemara, at the disposal of the company, and arrangements were made for a start on the following Saturday afternoon. With remarkable unanimity upon the part of all, except myself, I was elected historian of the trip, and in the following pages I have endeavored to record, day by day, a truthful narrative of our thirty days aboard the Shemara while in the West Indies and South America.

It must be distinctly understood that this is neither a diary nor a guide-book. I personally dislike the former, and have carefully refrained from reading the numerous published editions of the latter, to avoid repeating what others have already written.

## ***The West Indies***

It is intended to describe, without great detail, just what we saw, heard, and did. Much may be commonplace to those who have travelled before us, while all is necessarily partial and incomplete; but, at least, it is original, and I trust it may serve my companions and friends as a pleasant reminder of a most delightful cruise.

### ***The Start.***

**A**T 5.30 P.M., Saturday afternoon, October 20, all baggage having been sent aboard from Pier A, N.R., our party, consisting of Messrs. A. L. Barber, John M. Mack, Avery D. Andrews, all officials of the NATIONAL ASPHALT COMPANY; LeDroict L. Barber, son and guest of Mr. A. L. Barber; Dr. Homer Gibney, surgeon, and A. L. Robertson, stenographer, photographer, and general secretary of the trip, boarded Mr. Barber's splendid steam yacht, the Shemara, lying midstream off the Battery. On board, a few final preparations were being made, and a delay of a few hours was necessary to complete the electrical equipment, consisting of a new storage battery and electric fans, lamps, and other fittings. At the last moment, it was found necessary to take the electrician along with us for a few days, and to send him back from Bermuda. Dinner was served at 8, and at 9.45 P.M., everything having been made snug for a long cruise, the anchor was weighed, and we started for Bermuda, "full speed ahead."

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The weather was clear, but decidedly cold, and our heaviest overcoats were necessary. At 11.10 we passed Scotland Light, took our course S. 33° east for St. David's Light, Bermuda, and all went below for the first night aboard.

Sunday, October 21.

### At Sea.

SUNDAY morning found two of our stokers ill with cramps, resulting from the sudden substitution of hard and hot work for a previous debauch. During the day the number of sick increased to four, so that others of the crew, including the engineers, were obliged to perform the duties of firemen. This reduced our speed to ten or eleven knots. At noon, our latitude was 38° 36" N., and longitude 71° 26" W., showing only 177 miles from Scotland Light. The weather was perfect; just enough breeze to justify putting up the fore-stay sail and main-stay sail. Not a white-cap in sight, and only the gentlest of ocean swells. No one suffered from *mal de mer*, although one of the party decided that lunch and dinner were unnecessary. At 11 o'clock A.M. the temperature of the water rose from 65° to 68°, and later to 70°, indicating that we had entered the Gulf Stream. During the afternoon one steamship was sighted far away, off the star-board bow, and, a little later, another, off the port

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bow; but neither were near enough for signals. The weather continued perfect all day.

Monday, October 22.

*At Sea.*

THE illness of the stokers proved to be a combination of cramps and sea-sickness, still resulting in reduced speed. At noon our latitude was  $35^{\circ} 19''$  N., and longitude  $68^{\circ} 34''$  W., showing a run of only 241 miles during the day previous. A hat-pool on the day's run was won by the Philadelphia contingent, who subsequently lost his entire winnings on two bets; one that a vessel of some sort would be sighted during the day, and one that a vessel would be sighted before five o'clock, both of which were lost. The weather continued perfect, but much warmer. At 3 A.M. we left the Gulf Stream.

Tuesday, October 23.

*Bermuda.*

AT 10.30 A.M., Gibbs Hill Light, on the extreme southwest point of the Bermuda Islands, was sighted, and, a little later, the high land to the north came into view. On account of the numerous coral reefs, extending many miles from land, we kept well out to sea until we took on board our pilot. He came out a distance of several miles in a long,



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peculiarly shaped, and most gaudily painted gig-boat, propelled in part by a three-cornered sail, and in part by seven oarsmen, a mixture of white and black. The entrance to the inner harbor is winding and difficult, so much so that a local pilot is a real necessity, and not an official encumbrance, as in some other ports where he would be gladly dispensed with, if harbor regulations permitted. For twenty miles or more we turned and twisted between coral reefs, some above water, but more below, until, finally, passing successively the Quarantine and Naval stations, we steamed through a rocky channel, not more than twice or three times the width of the Shemara, into the land-locked harbor of Hamilton. At Quarantine, a very smart English officer of the Royal Hospital Marine Service, in khaki uniform, greeted us most cordially, and insisted upon personally inspecting our seasick firemen. As we approached the Naval Station, a launch put out to meet us, and we were boarded by a young officer from H. M. S. *Hermes*, who made a few polite inquiries as to who we were, where we came from, and where we were going, after which we were allowed to proceed without further interruption, and at 3.30 P.M. dropped anchor within a hundred yards of the main wharf, along Front Street, Hamilton. The only other vessel in the inner harbor at the time was the *Francis A. Barstow*, of New Bedford, Mass., an old-fashioned whaler, brigantine

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rig, which had come into port to dispose of her oil, and had then been deserted by a large part of her Portuguese crew.

Going ashore, we called upon Hon. W. Maxwell Greene, United States Consul, and received our first cables from home, reporting all well. The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to a drive to the military head-quarters, Government House, and the "flats." Besides the Naval Station, which is one of the largest in the English service, there are about 2,000 troops stationed here, consisting of the first Battalion of the West Indian Regiment (colored) and several companies of Royal Artillery and Engineers. The West Indian Battalion saw hard service in the war with the Ashantees, and was brought here less than a year ago for rest and recuperation. This reminds one of Bill Travers' comment upon Bermuda. He said that he had been advised to go to Bermuda by his surgeon for a "change and rest," but that the porters got all his "change," and the hotel-keepers got all the "rest."

The West Indian soldiers are of magnificent physique, well drilled, and should make excellent soldiers. Their uniform is picturesque, consisting of dark blue jacket or tunic and short, baggy trousers, the latter falling a little below the knee, white stockings and spats, and the usual variety of English head-gear, including the red "Tommy Atkins" cap. The large size and muscular de-

## and South America

velopment of the men was most striking, although this effect may have been due partially to the short, baggy trousers and the loose tunics. Later on, we saw about seventy-five of them at drill, the boyish-looking officers wearing close-fitting and light-colored khaki uniforms, presenting a strange contrast among the black and brawny privates.

We visited the horticultural grounds of Mr. Outerbridge, and were greatly impressed with the size and variety of the semi-tropical plants. There were fragrant giant lilies, sago palms, the long and feathery pampas grass growing several feet high, the white cup-shaped moon flower, every variety of oleander—many of them forty or fifty feet high, night-blooming cereus, besides banana, cocoa-nut, date, and palm trees in endless variety. The climate here, while not tropical, is mild and very equable throughout the year, and produces in great perfection all semi-tropical plants and foliage.

Wednesday, October 24.

### *Bermuda.*

THE day was spent in a drive before breakfast to see guard mounting, a drive during the forenoon to Gibbs Hill, a few calls and purchases, and at 4.15 we weighed anchor and started for Porto Rico, after a most charming visit of twenty-four hours in the Bermudas. It is said that there are three hundred and sixty-five islands in the

## **The West Indies**

group, one for each day in the year, although to make up this number every visible coral reef in the group must be counted. There are only a few islands of any considerable size, including St. George, St. David, Somerset, Hamilton, and Ireland. Besides the Colonial Government and Naval Station here, Bermuda is chiefly to be remembered for its charming climate, its white - coral houses and streets, and its potatoes, onions, and Easter lilies. A granite monument has been erected to the governor who first discovered Bermuda onions and potatoes; or, to speak more accurately, to the governor who first discovered that onions and potatoes could be raised here in great perfection for the early American market. There are no farms, but mere patches of rich soil of half an acre or more in extent among the coral rocks. Everything here is subservient to the potato and onion industry. The billygoats, which exist in great numbers, and even the chickens, are "anchored" by the left foreleg to keep them out of the onion patches.

Gibbs Light, about eight miles from Hamilton, is a brick and iron lighthouse, about one hundred and fifty feet high, from which incoming and passing steamers are signalled to Hamilton and to Government House. We climbed the one hundred and ninety or more steps, and were well repaid by a magnificent view of the harbor and numerous small islands.

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A stranger is instantly impressed with the cleanliness of the community and the air of substantial prosperity which pervades every part of these islands. Every building is of the purest white. Even the roofs are made of coral, sometimes called Bermuda stone, and the walls, fences, outbuildings, rain-catches, and structures of every kind are regularly and scrupulously whitewashed, under the penalty of the law. The soil upon the islands consists of a thin coating of decomposed rock or vegetable matter, while in many places the coral reefs are entirely bare. The only tree of any consequence is a species of dwarfed red cedar, which grows in profusion almost everywhere, so that the dazzling white, low buildings, set among the dense green of the cedar, produces a most picturesque and interesting landscape effect. One of the most attractive places here is that of General Hastings, called "Soncy." It is hard to realize that this most charming semi-tropical spot is but little more than forty-eight hours in direct line from New York City. Its clear atmosphere, balmy sunshine, equable temperature, and glorious flowers and foliage, make it an ideal winter resort, which must in time become far more popular with Americans than it is now. Our short stay in Bermuda was most delightful, and our chief regret upon departing, Wednesday afternoon, for our newly acquired possessions in Porto Rico, was that these islands had not also been brought under

## *The West Indies*

the rapidly extending domain of the Stars and Stripes.

Thursday, October 25.

*At Sea.*

**S**HORTLY after leaving Bermuda last evening, we encountered a stiff easterly wind, which the Captain described as an "intensified trade," due probably to a hurricane or other severe disturbance in the Caribbean Sea. His prediction proved to be correct, and for a day and a half, or until Friday morning, the yacht pitched and rolled in a heavy sea. The maximum roll, as measured on the shade deck, was 42 degrees, but constant rolling of from 30 to 35 degrees prevailed. The fore-stay-sail, jib, and main staysail were set, and served to steady the ship considerably. It is hardly necessary to say that many of the party, and some of the crew, were seriously disturbed by the heavy sea. Fiddles were put upon the dining-room table, but only a few of the party appeared at meals on Thursday.

Friday, October 26.

*At Sea.*

**T**HIS morning the wind abated considerably, although still strong from the east. Not a sail has been sighted since we left Bermuda. The day's run was two hundred and sixty knots, and was uneventful.

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Saturday, October 27.

*At Sea.*

THE weather was pleasant, with trade-wind as usual. The day's run at noon was two hundred and sixty-four and one-half knots. The stokers have done but little, if any, better than they did on the run from New York, consequently our speed has been scarcely eleven knots. The temperature for the last two days has been most delightful; the air warm and balmy, so much so that we sit on deck all day and during the evening without coats, waistcoats, or hats, and with the lightest underclothing. About 9.30 P.M. we sighted, almost simultaneously, the light on Morro Castle and the light on the northeasterly point of Porto Rico, known as Point San Juan. In an hour we were within a few miles of Morro, but, on account of the narrowness of the entrance to the harbor of San Juan, it was thought best not to enter until daylight. Three wrecks have been sunk in the entrance to the harbor at the narrowest part, so that it is now barely two hundred and fifty feet in width. We therefore steamed slowly up and down the coast during the night.

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Sunday, October 28.

*San Juan de Porto Rico.*

AT 5.30 this morning we were all on deck in pajamas, getting our first view of San Juan de Porto Rico. Morro Castle loomed up in the gray dawn, and from her flagstaff soon floated the Stars and Stripes. As we approached the Morro we took aboard a native pilot, and ran into the harbor, past the wrecks, past the Mayflower, the naval auxiliary now stationed here, formerly Mr. Ogden Goelet's private yacht, and dropped anchor near the main wharves. Just ahead of us, the San Juan, of the New York and Porto Rico Steamship Company, ran in from Ponce.

After breakfast, the morning was devoted to a long drive through the town, and out over the military road, through San Tourcey. The principal incident of this drive was the very small size of the horses, and the very large size of the livery charge. A couple of drives at those rates would easily buy the whole establishment.

San Juan is a good type of an old walled Spanish city. Morro stands out boldly at the extreme end of the point of land as you enter the harbor. Less than a mile to the southward, another heavy fortification, with connecting ramparts, cuts off the point, and, with the waters of the bay and ocean, completely encircles the town. Within this small



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space the town is very compactly built in the usual Spanish style. There is a decided element of picturesqueness in the yellow, green, and gray tints of the old buildings and fortifications. Its streets are comparatively well paved with vitrified brick, or stone block pavement, and are relatively clean. The first thing we saw upon landing at the wharf was thoroughly typical of American occupation. It consisted of an ox-cart, with several men, under the close supervision of an armed United States soldier, cleaning the streets per force. Enormous progress has undoubtedly been made in the last two years in cleaning up the city, but it still impresses the visitor as a city among whose more striking characteristics may be included dirty children, narrow streets, and doubtful odors.

Monday, October 29.

### *San Juan and St. Thomas.*

IN the morning we had a most agreeable call upon Governor-General Allen, at his palace. The word "palace," when used in connection with former Spanish territory, requires explanation. To many it may convey an idea of marble halls, grand staircases, a profusion of works of art and splendid furnishings, gilded throne-rooms, and the other usual accompaniments of an up-to-date palace ; but such, at least, is not the case in San Juan de Porto

## **The West Indies**

Rico. The palace is an old building of considerable size, not far from Morro Castle, and was the official residence of the Captain-General under the Spanish reign. In America it would be considered a dilapidated and old-fashioned house, with but few of the comforts and none of the luxuries of a modern dwelling. The throne-room was architecturally attractive, and its decorations, after the removal of the so-called throne by our military authorities, were modest and in good taste. The other rooms were bare, the furniture cheap and uninviting, and the whole palace a poor substitute for an American home of moderate pretensions.

We spent a half-hour with Governor-General Allen, and met a few members of his cabinet. He gave us a most interesting account of the difficulties constantly encountered in establishing a new civil government in the island. Although containing nearly 1,000,000 inhabitants, they have been for so many years under the arbitrary rule of the Spanish military that they have no conception of the authority of law, as separate and distinct from the tyranny of an individual. Two members of his executive council declined, like petulant children, to perform their functions, solely because the government was not being organized precisely as they desired. They simply "wouldn't play." Not the least of the interesting incidents of our visit to the Governor-General's palace was a

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picture of the first Grand Jury of Porto Rico, which had just been convened.

The rents in San Juan are high, and the value of land has gone up enormously since the American occupation. In one case, land which could have been purchased for \$160 an acre before the American occupation is now held at \$3,000 per acre. There seems at present to be little or no building in San Juan, although there is a great deal in Ponce, which has taken a decided lead over San Juan in adopting American methods and enterprise. Governor Allen told us that one thousand buildings, costing from \$5,000 to \$30,000 each, had been started in Ponce since May 1, 1900, and that twenty or more applications for electric railroad or other franchises had been made in that city. San Juan, however, is essentially a Spanish town, and is apparently destined to remain without considerable change for some time to come.

Yesterday afternoon we were interested in the arrival of the large Spanish steamer *Cataluna*, direct from Barcelona and the Canary Islands, with a large number of passengers aboard bound for Havana and New York. She was immediately surrounded by scores of bumboats, with fruits and knick-knacks for sale, seeking to convey passengers and baggage ashore. The *Cataluna* anchored close to us, and, after coaling all night, left early in the morning for Havana. It will be remembered that this ship was one of our first

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captures in the war with Spain. She was subsequently released upon the ground that she had sailed from New Orleans before actual hostilities had commenced.

At 11.30 we sailed for St. Thomas, seventy-nine miles away. It is difficult to describe the pleasures and delights of yachting among these islands over smooth summer seas. The hillsides are thrown into lights and shadows of the most beautiful green, broken now and then by a tropical shower, which envelops a part of the landscape in mists and clouds. The exquisite foliage, with the clear skies above and dark blue water below, makes a picture not soon forgotten, particularly when viewed by the hour from the shady deck of a luxurious yacht, fanned by the softest and balmiest of tropical breezes. Islands are constantly in sight, some large, many small, generally rising quite abruptly from the water.

Steaming along the northern shore of Porto Rico, then passing Sail Rock, we entered the harbor of the Island of St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, at about 5.30 P.M. This harbor is the most beautiful we have seen, and is probably the best in the West Indies. It is almost a circle in form, with hills rising abruptly from all sides, and the city of Charlotte Amalie resting at the base of the hills, on the very edge of the water, and extending slightly up the mountain-sides. The red roofs of the houses against the green background of the

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hills, presents a most picturesque effect. The whole picture is the most effective bit of nature's handiwork that we have seen.

We remained here until about noon on Wednesday, rambling around this quaint and interesting Danish city. The buildings are of the most substantial type, the streets are kept in excellent condition, and everywhere is to be seen the evidence of thrift, economy, and good administration. English is taught in all the schools here, and it is said that every person of mature years, colored included, is able to speak and write our language. St. Thomas has but little agriculture, and is almost wholly commercial. Its chief native product is bay rum, which is manufactured here in considerable quantities. Its chief object of sentimental interest is the ancient so-called castle perched upon one of the hills surrounding the harbor, which tradition has associated with the name of Blue Beard. It is pointed out as Blue Beard's castle, and seems to be constructed and located in true conformity with the Blue Beard legends. We were here for the first time introduced to a very fine quality of St. Croix rum and guava jelly, samples of both of which were provided for future use at home.

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Tuesday, October 30.

*St. Croix.*

WE left St. Thomas about 11.30 A.M., for St. Croix, once the home of Alexander Hamilton, thirty-six miles to the southward, arriving there about three o'clock. This island, which with St. Thomas and St. Johns, constitutes the Danish West Indies, is purely agricultural, thus differing entirely from St. Thomas. The village of Frederickstaadt, which we visited, is a small and uninteresting town, important only as the shipping port for the sugar of the island. We called upon Major Moore, for many years United States Consular Agent at this place, but finding him absent, spent some time with Mr. Merwin, a native of Connecticut and acting Consular Agent. Mr. Merwin has been in this island nearly fifteen years, and is thoroughly familiar with its people and products. He reports a strong sentiment in favor of the proposed sale of these islands by Denmark to the United States, although some opposition to the sale has developed, curiously, among the mulattoes. We were reminded of the turmoil attending the close of the Presidential campaign at home by being told that many of the mulattoes here were cordially advocating Bryan's election, upon the theory that in some way their social condition would be thereby

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improved in case of a sale to the United States; or at least that their condition would be prejudiced by the election of McKinley. It was said that some of the mulattoes in St. Croix were wearing Bryan buttons, but of this we had no personal evidence.

When the price of sugar was high, these islands yielded to Denmark a handsome income, but with the enormous growth of the beet-sugar industry, and the competition of other parts of the world in cane-sugar, the price has dropped, so that the revenues are now a mere fraction of their former amount. Denmark nevertheless still maintains a fully equipped colonial government. The Governor-General resides at Christianstaadt, St. Croix. About one hundred regular soldiers are stationed at St. Croix and seventy-five at St. Thomas, together with a full quota of colonial officials. This form of government has resulted in a deficiency of about \$150,000 per annum to the Danish Government for the last fifteen years, and it is evident that Denmark must soon relinquish control in favor of some stronger power. We have now practically all of the commerce of these islands, so that little would be gained commercially. Upon the other hand, however, the United States certainly cannot afford to permit these islands to fall into the hands of England, Germany, Russia, or some other European power who would be glad to acquire them at any price.

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St. Johns, the other one of the group, is small and contains only six hundred population. St. Croix is valuable agriculturally, its annual product of sugar amounting to about 18,000 tons; while the purchase of St. Thomas could almost be justified as a work of art, not to mention its magnificent harbor.

We drove out over the Kings Road, through miles of sugar-cane, and were entertained by the colored boys climbing to the tops of cocoa-nut trees and throwing down the cocoa-nuts. We left about seven o'clock for St. Kitts, one hundred and forty miles distant.

Wednesday, October 31,

*Saba and St. Kitts.*

WE were all on deck in pajamas at six in the morning to catch a glimpse of Saba, a precipitous rock, two miles in diameter, 3,800 feet in height, rising abruptly from the sea, and inhabited by about 2,000 Dutch colonists. We steamed slowly around the entire island, greatly interested in picking out with our glasses the two small settlements and scattering Dutch houses constructed near the top of the mountain. No one can imagine more curious or inaccessible dwellings for human beings. They can be reached only through an occasional gully which rends the sides of the otherwise perpen-



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dicular mountain. One of the settlements is in the crater at the very top. There is but a single anchorage on the island, where there were two or three small fishing-boats. It is said that excellent boats are manufactured in the settlement at the top of the mountain and lowered to the sea.

Forty miles beyond, we dropped anchor at Basse-Terre, the open roadstead and port of the island of St. Kitts. The approach to St. Kitts from the sea is most beautiful. The hill-sides are covered with sugar-cane, and form a checker-board of green fields. Landing at the wharf, we were again, and for the first time since leaving Bermuda, under the English flag. The town of Basse-Terre is uninteresting, aside from the extensive botanical garden which is maintained here by the British Government. We spent the forenoon in a visit to the sugar plantation of Captain Berkeley, formerly one of the largest and most important sugar plantations on the island, but, like many others, now in a state of partial decay. We found the sugar-works to be of the old style, and not in operation. We then drove to the estate of Lord Napier, and saw modern sugar-works in operation.

One cannot readily become accustomed to the sight, which is so common in the West Indies, of women working in the field, and frequently carrying the heaviest burdens in the streets. The wages on the plantations vary from twelve cents

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per day for second-class female labor, to twenty-five cents per day for first-class male labor of ten hours per day; but with these prices, small as they are, there is no evidence of extreme poverty, and the laboring classes seem to be able to live in comparative comfort.

We left St. Kitt's after a serenade by a dilapidated band, which, with a considerable portion of the population of the town, surrounded the yacht in small boats during our stay. Steaming southwest for Martinique, we passed Redonda Island, a most picturesque rock arising abruptly out of the sea and appearing from one point of view like a huge semi-dome. Later, we passed Nevis, the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton, and Montserrat, a possession of Great Britain, noted chiefly for its production of lime-juice.

Thursday, November 1.

### *Martinique and St. Lucia.*

**D**URING the night we passed the islands of Dominica and Guadeloupe, and at six o'clock in the morning were anchored in the harbor of St. Pierre, Martinique, once the home of the Empress Josephine. We were immediately surrounded by fifteen or twenty naked colored boys, paddling canoes made out of dry-goods boxes, and begging the "gem'um" to toss pennies overboard for them to dive for. The sight of a copper would

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produce the utmost eagerness on the faces of the entire score, while a piece of silver created a tumult. As soon as the coin reached the water they were all overboard in a scramble to catch it before it reached the bottom. This afforded us infinite amusement throughout our stay, and was of itself well worth the visit to Martinique. It was remarkable how rapidly they would paddle their dry-goods box canoes, with a piece of shingle in each hand. They would paddle alternately on either side of the canoe with a long sweep, and make comparatively high speed, stopping frequently to ladle the water out of the canoe with one or both shingles. We saw diving boys in many ports, but none equalled those of Martinique.

After early coffee, we went ashore and walked out to the Botanical Gardens, spending some time in admiring the great variety of magnificent tropical trees, shrubs, and flowers, including particularly the large and richly colored water-lilies which were being gathered by naked mulattoes in the lily ponds. As the day was a holiday, All Saint's Day, the stores and shops were closed, so that after a short walk around the town, we left about ten o'clock for St. Lucia.

Every visitor must note the unusual size of the women here, and their great skill and strength shown in carrying upon their heads the heaviest burdens. The town is an interesting type of an old French city. Leaving Martinique, we steamed past

## The West Indies

the battle-ground of Rodney and De Grasse, *en route* to St. Lucia.

### St. Lucia.

**W**E arrived at the dock in St. Lucia, once more under the English flag, about 1.30 in the afternoon, and prepared to take on coal, the first since leaving New York. This is the chief coaling station of the English Admiralty in the West Indies, and is a strongly fortified harbor. It resembles somewhat the harbor of St. Thomas, but is not as large or as picturesque, although strongly defended by fortifications and artillery at the entrance and around the entire harbor. We found here a few companies of the West Indian colored regiment, and other English troops, aggregating about seven hundred in all.

The decided feature of our visit to St. Lucia was the manner in which the yacht was coaled by colored men and women carrying large baskets of coal on their heads. The loaded baskets were weighed occasionally, and were averaged as of one hundred pounds each, without the weight of the basket. These baskets were placed squarely on the top of the head, and carried along at a rapid walk or run with the utmost facility, and without spilling an ounce. It was particularly interesting to note the way in which a full basket was tossed from the head of one to another. A man would frequently fill and carry the basket a short dis-

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tance; then transfer it to the head of a woman, who would carry it the remaining distance and dump it aboard the yacht. There were more women carriers than men, and they seemed stronger and quicker at their work. About a ton of coal a minute was put aboard in this way.

The chief port of St. Lucia Castries, is a small and ordinary village of the usual West Indian type. The people speak a French patois, dating from the French occupation of years ago. Leaving St. Lucia at 10 P.M., we steamed direct for Barbadoes, one hundred and forty-two miles distant.

Friday, November 2.

### *Barbadoes.*

WE arrived in the open roadstead off Barbadoes about 9 o'clock in the morning, and after anchoring received the usual visits from the Health Officer and a Lieutenant representing the senior commanding officer of the English war-ships Tribune and Indefatigable, lying near by. This English custom of sending an officer to visit incoming vessels, extending to them, as in our case, the courtesies of the port, is a most hospitable one, and well worthy of imitation by other nations. We were again surrounded by diving boys in canoes, who afforded us considerable amusement, but they were not equal to the boys at Martinique.

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Bridgetown, the chief port, is a city of some 30,000 inhabitants, and is one of the largest and busiest cities we have seen since leaving New York. The island, though small, has a dense population, and produces large quantities of sugar and cocoa. In its general aspects, however, it does not differ from the other West Indian Islands that we have visited, except possibly that the mulattoes here were more numerous and more persistent in their personal attentions to us than at any other port. After landing we drove through St. Ann's Garrison, where quite a large force of troops were quartered, and visited the Marine Hotel, a pretentious building constructed many years ago by Collis P. Huntington in connection with his steamship lines. At 6 P.M., we started for Grenada.

Saturday, November 3.

### *Grenada.*

EARLY in the morning we passed the S.S. Orinoco of the Quebec Line, with her bow high upon the rocks about fifteen miles from St. George, the capital and principal city of the Island of Grenada. We also passed the British Cruiser Indefatigable which had left Barbadoes about half an hour ahead of us, on its way to assist the wrecked steamer. The wreck was apparently in a dangerous position, her stern nearly

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under water, and several holes through her bottom.

We reached Grenada about seven in the morning, and were immediately surrounded with the usual crowd of bum-boatmen. This harbor resembles St. Thomas, although much smaller. It is surrounded by hills upon which the British Government has established fortifications. Government House is beautifully situated upon one of these hills commanding a fine view of the harbor. At 10.30 we went ashore and made an official call upon Sir Alfred Maloney, the Governor-General of the Island of Grenada, who has just been promoted to the Governor-Generalship of the Island of Trinidad. Government House is located in the midst of most luxurious tropical trees and foliage. The city is old, and is not of great importance commercially, the principal product of the island being the cocoa-bean.

In the afternoon Sir Alfred and Lady Maloney, their daughter, the Honorable Mr. Probyn, Colonial Secretary and Attorney-General of the Island, and Mrs. Probyn, and a few others, came aboard the Shemara for an afternoon's run to the wreck. On our way out, we met the Indefatigable returning to Grenada. The wreck had settled somewhat at the stern since morning, but otherwise had not changed position. In the evening, we dined at Government House with Sir Alfred and Lady Maloney and a number of other

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guests, including Captain Campbell, of the *Indefatigable*, and his Executive Officer. At 11.30 P.M., we sailed for Trinidad.

Sunday, November 4.

### *Trinidad.*

AT six o'clock in the morning, we were all on the bridge in our usual morning costume, to see the Bocas, or the Dragon's Mouth, a most peculiar and picturesque formation of rocks at the entrance to the Gulf of Paria. There are several deep and swift passages through which a ship can pass, with the rocks rising abruptly on either side. We passed through the narrowest channel, making the hills ring with the echoes from our whistle. At eight o'clock we were anchored off Port-of-Spain, and were met by Major Rafferty, the General Agent of the Company, in the company's steam-launch *Carib*, and by the Agent of the Trinidad Shipping and Trading Company, Mr. Francis, in the steam-tug *Edith*. After a brief call ashore, we decided to run down to Brighton, thirty miles distant, and take a look at Pitch Lake and the asphalt properties.

The afternoon was spent ashore, riding over the lake on a hand-car, and driving in the vicinity, passing through the village of La Brea. No one can see Pitch Lake without being impressed with the fact that this famous deposit of one hundred



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and fourteen acres is properly termed a "lake." Eight hundred and five tons had been dug the previous day, and loaded upon a schooner at the wharf. All indications of the place from which this asphalt had been dug had disappeared, the excavations having been filled up to the general level by inflowing material. There were pools of water in the crevasses, but the lake was said to be unusually dry, so much so that we readily walked almost everywhere. The appearance of the village of La Brea was most interesting. Enormous holes have been made by the excavation of land asphalt, so much so that the buildings are tumbling one way and another in a truly remarkable and uncertain fashion. The Catholic Church has been affected so seriously that it is about to be removed to firmer ground. The excavation of land asphalt seems now to be confined to a lot which was formerly a church grave-yard, and a few lots along the shore from which the sea has been kept out only by the construction of a considerable embankment. Under the decision of the Privy Council, known as the lateral support case, it does not seem probable that any considerable amount of land asphalt can hereafter be dug from the remaining land asphalt deposits.

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Monday, November 5.

### *Port of Spain.*

**E**ARLY in the morning we returned to Port-of-Spain, and spent the day in business conferences, a drive about town, a mid-day breakfast at the Queen's Park Hotel given by Major and Mrs. Rafferty, and a call in the afternoon upon the acting-governor, Sir Courtenay Knollys and Lady Knollys at Government House. This city is by far the most prosperous of any that we have seen in the West Indies. Its population is about 60,000, and that of the island about 275,000. An interesting feature of the town is the large number of coolies living here, being brought direct from India under a five-year contract system. The coolie women, wearing silver rings upon their fingers, arms, ankles, ears, and generally through their nose, are to be seen sitting around the streets watching their men at work. A drive through the coolie village gave us a glimpse of the coolie dwellings and children, most of the latter being entirely naked.

Government House is a large, modern, and spacious mansion built in the Botanical Gardens and facing the Savannah. The Savannah is a feature of these large West Indian towns, consisting of a large park or parade ground centrally located, in

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which troops are drilled, and races, golf, tennis and other athletic sports are held.

The Queen's Park Hotel, a modern structure and much the best hotel we have seen in the West Indies, faces the Savannah, nearly opposite Government House.

Tuesday, November 6.

### *San Juan River and Guanoco.*

LATE Monday evening we left Port-of-Spain for a trip to Bermudez Pitch Lake at Guanoco, Venezuela, which is some fifty miles up the San Juan River, a large and deep stream flowing into the southwestern portion of the Gulf of Paria. The approach to the mouth of the river was made at daylight and with considerable difficulty, owing to the shallowness of the water over the bar, and was further complicated by the fact that one of the two buoys marking the course seemed to have been carried away by the tide. We were obliged to send the mate with a small boat ahead to make soundings, and eventually proceeded slowly and with great caution over the bar and safely into the mouth of the river.

The trip up the San Juan was most interesting. The river at its mouth is a mile or more wide and very deep. The shores are low—absolutely flat. Dense forests cover every foot of both shores,

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and grow down not only to the water's edge, but hang into and over the river. At Tigers' Point, a mile or two above the entrance to the river, we ran the bow of the yacht within a few feet of the shore, the bowsprit actually touching the trees. It is at this point that it is proposed to erect a Custom-house to facilitate shipments of asphalt from Bermudez Lake, some forty or fifty miles farther up the stream. After proceeding a few miles above Tigers' Point, we met the steamship *Therese* bound for New York loaded with 2,200 tons of asphalt, convoyed by the tug *Rescue*, belonging to the New York & Bermudez Company. We took on board a pilot from the *Rescue*, after which the *Therese* and *Rescue* proceeded on their way. Reaching the junction of the San Juan and Guarapichi (or Francis) River, we proceeded up the latter to its junction with the Maturin. Here we sent the pilot ahead with our papers to make our entry in Venezuelan waters at the Custom-house, some six miles farther on; the yacht turning around and proceeding back to the San Juan, and thence up the latter river on our way to Guanoco.

With the exception of the crews of the *Therese* and *Rescue*, we did not see a single human being on our way, up any of these rivers. The foliage was most luxuriant, and its dense green was occasionally varied by red ibis and other beautifully plumaged birds. We had occasional showers during

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the day, but otherwise the weather was not unpleasant, nor the heat oppressive.

About five o'clock we reached the junction of the San Juan and Guanoco Rivers and anchored. We then went up the Guanoco in the steam-launch about three miles to its junction with the Cicaina and Joynal Rivers, which together form the Guanoco, and then a half mile up the Joynal to the Company's settlement, known as Guanoco. We were cordially greeted at the wharf by a hundred or more of the colored laborers, and after a short call upon Mr. Stephens, the Superintendent, at Headquarters House, and making arrangements for a visit to the lake to-morrow, returned to the steam-launch. Our trip down the Joynal and Guanoco Rivers was one long to be remembered. The waters were perfectly smooth, and the reflection of the forests in the water was perfect. The moon was full, and the air soft and balmy. Approaching the yacht, her image, even to the smallest detail, was reflected in the water, making a perfect double picture. Our party was essentially a party of business men upon a business trip; but for once, at least, business gave place to sentiment, and admiration of the exquisite beauties of nature dispelled for the moment all thoughts of business problems.

At dinner, on the yacht that evening, we discussed the interesting events of the day which we had spent upon superb rivers in the very heart of a

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South American wilderness, and speculated as to the results of the election at home. It was election-day, and the choice between McKinley and Bryan had been made, but the result could not be known to us for two or three days at least.

Wednesday, November 7.

### *Guanoco and Bermudez Pitch Lake.*

**W**E breakfasted at seven o'clock, and started immediately in the steam-launch for Guanoco. Arriving at the wharf a little before eight o'clock, we were transferred to a special train, consisting of an engine and one passenger-car, and started for the lake, five and one-half miles distant over the Guanoco and La Brea Railroad. The railroad journey was through the most dense of tropical forests. On the way we passed one or two Indian settlements. Arriving at the lake, we put on our rubber boots and prepared for a tramp across and around the property.

The Pitch Lake at Trinidad has become one of the wonders and curiosities of the world, and has, owing to its accessibility, been visited by many people: but this lake, though larger, has until recently been comparatively unknown. The lake is completely surrounded by dense forests of tan-trees, and is over one thousand acres in extent, while that of Trinidad is only one hundred and fourteen. In addition to this, the asphalt con-

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tains more bitumen, and is found in a purer condition. There was considerable surface water on the lake, particularly at the lower edge near the refinery and the terminal station of the railroad. The men engaged in digging pitch from the lake were working in water varying in depth from their knees to their armpits. The natives of Venezuela will not work in the water, owing to their fear of boa-constrictors and other snakes which are occasionally found. The boa-constrictors are sometimes from sixteen to eighteen feet in length, and it must be confessed that there is some ground for their prejudice. Laborers from Trinidad and other places, however, will do the work, although always with some hesitation. This suggests the importance of drainage. With the surface water out of the way, one man could easily do the work of two, thereby diminishing materially the cost of production. The problem is worthy of careful study.

Our party started out with full ranks, under the guidance of Mr. Stephens, the Superintendent; "Bobby," the Venezuelan foreman who has been ten years with the company; "Morta," a native guide, and several men carrying rain-coats, umbrellas, and liquid refreshments. Our tramp across the lower end of the lake alternated with wading through shallow water, and climbing along poles and reeds which had been thrown into the deeper water, supported in part upon mattresses of palm

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branches. After proceeding a half mile, we halted about the middle of the lake, at the boundary of the so-called "La Venezuela" claim, and here a suggestion was made by some members of the party that as the walking was bad and the temperature high, a short cut across the lake would be desirable. Others desired to examine the boundaries of the "La Venezuela" and "La Felicidad" claims, as well as those of the entire property. The party therefore broke up, the majority going direct to the ranch-house on the Felicidad claim, and the others continuing around the boundaries of Felicidad, finally bringing up at the ranch-house in a pouring tropical rain.

After slight refreshments, the main party returned to the starting-point at the refinery, while the exploring party, which by this time had been reduced to two, with Bobby and Morta as guides, continued on to the ranch-house upon the Venezuela claim, and then still farther on to the original house or "casa" upon the extreme boundary of the New York and Bermudez Company's property, in which is the large corner-stone marked "N. Y. & B. Co.," returning from that point diagonally across the entire property to the refinery. There is but one asphalt lake here, the whole of which has been in the company's actual possession for many years. No one who has visited the lake could honestly pretend that it was capable of division into separate lakes or claims,



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such as Felicidad or Venezuela, any more than Lake Erie or Lake Ontario could be divided into separate lakes.

While the exploring party, consisting of Major Rafferty, the guides, and historian, was away from the main party, several events of importance occurred which the historian is unable to describe from personal knowledge. It is said, however, that the two senior members of our party decided that the Oriental method of transportation, consisting of a swing or hammock suspended from a stout pole and carried upon the shoulders of natives, was superior to the ordinary method of tramping through Venezuelan swamps. The method was all right, but there were serious difficulties in its execution. One of the pole-bearers, either by accident or as the result of bribery, the exact truth will probably never be known, stepped into a deep hole, lost control of himself and the pole, and as the result, dropped his unfortunate passenger from Philadelphia into a deep pool of water, beneath which was a soft pool of pitch. This accident, while resulting in no serious injury, caused a precipitate abandonment of this method of transportation. Upon our return to the refinery, several hours after the main party, we found that lunch had been served and the difficulties of the day forgotten in the delights of a good lunch and some "two for a cent" Venezuelan cigars, purchased at the Company's stores.

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The refinery at La Brea, the terminal station of the railroad, is a modern plant and a great addition to the Company's business. It was approaching completion, and presented a strange contrast amid the tropical swamps and wilderness. We returned by special train to Guanoco, and after looking over the Company's plant, machine shops, terminal facilities, reached the yacht about five o'clock, and started immediately down the San Juan River, across the bar and out into the Gulf of Paria.

Thursday, November 8.

### *Pedernales and Brighton.*

WE anchored at daylight opposite Pedernales about ten miles from the shore. A bar at the mouth of the Pedernales River, prevents a vessel of the size of the yacht from going nearer. A few of our party breakfasted at six o'clock and went ashore in the steam-launch to inspect the Pedernales asphalt deposit and plant. We had considerable difficulty in making a landing, as the wharf was in ruins, and timbers and old iron made the approach quite dangerous. We found the place entirely deserted and without even a single watchman. Nothing has apparently been done here for the last five or six years, or since the fire which practically destroyed the plant. The visible deposit consists

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of tar springs, which in bubbling up have run over the ground, causing a deposit of pitch a few inches in thickness, mixed with dirt. Although there may be oil or pitch in quantities at a considerable depth, there is no surface indication of a commercial supply. After photographing the ruins, and spending an hour or so ashore, we returned to the yacht. Upon our way out, the tide was with us, but the wind against us, which in the shallow water, kicked up a decidedly heavy sea. At the start we could see nothing of the yacht except the very tops of her smoke-stack and spars, and in the heavy sea it was a decidedly lively ten miles in a small steam-launch. We reached the yacht safely, and sailed immediately for Brighton. We spent the afternoon and evening watching the plant in operation, driving around the village of La Brea, taking numerous photographs of the village and of the land asphalt digging in the old burying ground. John W. McCarthy, a prosperous and intelligent colored man, who knows more of the origin and development of the asphalt industry than any man in Trinidad, accompanied us on this trip, and explained, in detail, all the phases of the local controversies between land and lake asphalt interests.

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Friday, November 9.

### *Port-of-Spain.*

**E**ARLY in the morning we left Brighton for Port-of-Spain, where we found our first mail and newspapers from home. We spent most of the day ashore, attending to various business matters and picking up a few souvenirs preparatory to our final departure. A number of friends came aboard the yacht to see us off in the evening, and at seven o'clock we started for La Guaira, passing through the Grand Bocas about nine, thence turning eastward upon our homeward trip.

Saturday, November 10.

### *At Sea.*

**W**E took the inside passage, and at daylight were between the main coast of Venezuela and Margarita Island. The day was perfect, and the water almost as smooth as the Hudson River. We saw an occasional school of porpoises and many large birds, principally penguins. Margarita Island contains many high hills and mountains, and here and there a few villages are visible from the sea. It is this island which Germany desires to acquire, and its importance to that nation as a strong foothold in this part of the world can readily be seen. We proceeded all day at slow speed

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in order not to reach La Guaira before daylight.

At night we saw for the first time, in all its brilliancy, the phosphorescence in the sea. Hitherto since we have been in Southern waters, the moon has shone so brightly that the phosphorescence was not particularly noticeable. On this night, however, the effect was perfect. Upon every wave there seemed to be hundreds and thousands of sparkling crystals as brilliant as diamonds; while the schools of porpoises left behind them long trails of sparkling light, like miniature comets in the sea.

Sunday, November 11.

### *La Guaira.*

**E**ARLY in the morning we were rocking outside the breakwater at La Guaira, and shortly after were anchored in the contracted harbor, under the shelter of the breakwater erected some years ago by an English company. We passed an Italian cruiser lying just outside the breakwater, and alongside were a Venezuelan transport and ships of many nationalities.

La Guaira is a small and uninteresting town at the foot of steep hills rising abruptly from the water. A little back from the sea some of these hills become mountains of 8,000 or 9,000 feet in height, and around them can be seen the spiral railway twenty-two miles in length running into

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Caracas, only six miles distant as the crow flies. For business reasons we decided not to go to Caracas, and after lying at anchor until four o'clock in the afternoon, started quite suddenly for Curaçoa, one hundred and fifty-eight miles distant.

November 12 to 14.

### *Curaçoa.*

**E**ARLY in the morning we took aboard our pilot and entered the narrow passage to the inner landlocked harbor of Curaçoa, and were soon in the domain of young Queen Wilhelmina of Holland. Curaçoa is a curious Dutch town of 38,000 inhabitants, 28,000 of which are black. The city is spread out along both sides of a narrow inlet, which constitutes the entrance to the inner harbor, and across which there has been thrown a low pontoon bridge. A middle section of the pontoon bridge is pulled aside to allow vessels to pass. We drove around the city and the surrounding country, and admired the architecture of many of the Dutch buildings. The prevailing color is yellow with red roofs, varied with blues, grays, and whites. The harbor is filled with Golettas, a small light-draft sailing craft which brings to this port the products of the adjoining coast and neighboring islands, which are here transferred to sea-going vessels for shipment to all parts of the world. We coaled during the after-

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noon from the same wharves as did Admiral Cervera two years ago, just before his final and disastrous cruise to Santiago de Cuba. Coal and ice are expensive luxuries in this town. Ice was \$60 per ton, while Holland gin was cheaper than Apollinaris. We found a Dutch man-of-war lying in the harbor, which it is said has been here for two years; and were interested and amused at the opera-bouffe looking soldiers, who constitute the garrison of the city. They are slouchy in appearance, and wear plain and ill-fitting uniforms, with the old-fashioned high crowned forage cap used in our army many years ago. Their appearance indicated, as one of our party suggested, that they had recently escaped from Weber & Fields' Music Hall, or some equally valuable training school.

Curaçoa is low, and except for the trade-wind would be excessively hot. It is also very dry, rain being a rare occurrence. We were told on arrival that it had not rained for three years, but this was subsequently reduced to two years, and our latest informant said two months, although, as a matter of fact, there were a few showers while we were in the harbor. The lack of moisture is seen everywhere in the absence of grass, foliage, and flowers. The streets and private grounds are destitute of anything green, except small trees and cacti. We were unexpectedly delayed here for business reasons until Wednesday afternoon, November 14,

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when at about three o'clock, we put to sea bound direct for home.

November 14 to 19.

### *At Sea and Home.*

**S**KIRTING along the coast of Curaçoa, we soon changed our course to the northwest, and rounding the westerly end of the island, headed for Hayti and the Windward Passage. We were out of sight of land all day Thursday, but on Friday morning were quite near the westerly end of Hayti. Most of the day was spent in the Windward Passage, rounding Cape Maisi in the afternoon and entering the Old Bahama Channel north of Cuba. We had intended to visit Santiago, Havana, and possibly some other Cuban ports, but fearing prolonged quarantine on account of yellow fever at Havana, and hastened somewhat by business matters at home, we decided to run direct for Jacksonville, or some other convenient Florida port.

On Saturday we skirted the northern coast of Cuba and on Sunday were in the Florida straits with a heavy sea abeam. Some openly renounced all desire to ever eat again, while others, scouting the idea that they were ever ill at sea, gravely announced that their systems needed a rest. This may be an appropriate place to record a new version of an old story which was told on this mem-



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orable Sunday. A man who was in the deepest agonies of *mal-de-mer* was approached by some of his waggish friends, who solemnly announced that the ship could not weather the sea much longer and must soon go down with all on board.

"Do you really think so?" said he, eagerly.

"Yes," was the reply, "the Captain says so."

"Thank God," said the victim, clasping his hands with joy, "How *soon* do you think we will go?"

Monday afternoon, November 19, about one o'clock, found us off the bar at the mouth of the St. Johns River, Florida, anxiously waiting for tide and pilot to take us in. At five we crossed the bar, and after a couple of hours of twisting and turning in the placid waters of the St. Johns, were at anchor at Jacksonville, just thirty days after our departure from New York. We had slept aboard every night, had been at anchor only seven nights and had travelled 4,741 nautical miles. We had just time enough to catch the evening train north, and on Wednesday morning were in New York, home again.

Plunged again in the midst of the strenuous activity of New York life, the thought of the days spent lazily on the shady decks of the *Shemara*, cruising in those perfect summer seas, of the quiet villages and islands, where the arrival of a steamer or a stranger is an event of importance, of the dense untrodden South American forests, and of all that we have seen and done in those quaint

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and far-away lands, makes our trip now seem like a dream of another world from which we have been rudely awakened; to which, some day, we will gladly return.

The duty of the journalist would be far from complete without a special reference to the magnificent *Shemara*, which has been our home for so long; to its courteous and able commander, Captain H. Willis Jones; and to its most hospitable, kind, and genial owner, Commodore Amzi L. Barber. The *Shemara* was built by Rummage & Ferguson, at Leith, Scotland, in 1899, and has the most complete and perfect arrangements for the comfort of her guests. She has a dining saloon, music-room, and smoking-room on the main deck, with eight large state-rooms below. She has triple expansion engines of 120 horse-power, is 220 feet over all,  $182\frac{1}{4}$  feet between perpendiculars, extreme breadth 26 feet, depth 16.7, 580 tons yacht measurement, 237 tons register, and 800 tons displacement, and carried a crew of twenty-six. Well is she named *Shemara*, "Fairy of the Sea," she certainly was a good fairy to us. May she be a pleasure and joy to her owner for many years to come, as she was to us for a few weeks.

Of Captain Jones we can only say that he was always a skilful navigator, a firm disciplinarian, and a perfect gentleman and companion. With Captain Jones in charge, our cruise was run on

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schedule time, and sun, moon, and stars seemed to be always at his beck and call. May the Shemara always be in such good care !

And now of the Commodore, what more can be said ? His yacht was our yacht at all times, and everybody and everything aboard was at our service. Generous to a fault, always seeking to promote the comfort and pleasure of others, kind, genial, and considerate to all, surely no party ever had a more agreeable companion, nor a more charming and hospitable host. I am sure that I express the feelings of all in saying that the success and pleasure of the trip were due to the personal efforts and kindness of Mr. Barber.

1875

1876













